THE STEEPLE AND THE VINE.

The steeple stood so grand and high,
It challenged the gaze of the passers by.
"Who so lofty, I say!
Look ye over the way!"

A gentle voice at its foot made plain t,
"Give me support, or I fall, I faint;
I'm only a clinging vine,
Let me about thee twine."

The steeple barely deigned submit
To the gentle tendrils clasping it,
And with superior air
Sustained the vinelet fair.

Over the stone, so stained and gray,
The beautiful verdure found its way
From base to lofty spire,
Ever reaching higher.

The marvellous growth in its graceful lines
Wreathes and drapes and waves and twines,
Clasping with loving arms,
Giving its many charms.

Till even the haughty granite smiles
Beneath the tender, witching wiles,
Seeing itself adorned
By the humble vinelet scorned.

"This is my pride of all, I own;
It is sweeter not to be alone;
Grace can add to raggedness,
And love alone can bless."
—J. A. K., in Boston Transcript.

AN ANGEL.

Of course I was an old maid, any body in Maple Ridge could have told you that, and a good many would have said I was several years older than the old family Bible affirmed.

I felt all my three and thirty years, and knew that the dark little face that looked back at me so soberly from the cracked mirror showed them beyond question. But, what of that! I had other things to think of than that I was an old maid—many others.

There was poor Susie, our pet, the youngest of us all, who would marry handsome, reckless Noll Dasher, who, after a wild life of only a few years, ended it in a drunkard's grave, and left poor Susie and her two babies to me.

Nor was that all, for Fred, our eldest, the pride of our old father and mother's hearts, must marry too—which was well enough, only after one brief year in his city office he, too, grew sick and died—but oh, so peacefully, so nobly!

"You'll care for my wife and baby, Mary?" he said, looking at me so pleadingly, and I answered: "Yes, Fred, always."

So it wasn't much wonder I looked old, since only my little dress-making shop stood between us all and starvation.

Father and mother had become so feeble they could only sit on the side of the chimney and talk of their trials and sorrows.

Susie took upon herself the care of the large household, and I've shed many a secret tear at night thinking how wan and white she was growing, our beautiful little Susie.

What did Fred's wife do? I—that's a sore subject: no one ever said anything, but I have seen Susie shut her lips in a strange way when "the lady" swept into our simple meals and never offered to soil her white hands even to wash her own dishes or clothes.

"She's never been taught to work, I suppose," I thought; "poor thing!"

Then I bent lower over my sewing and sat up a little later.

Things had gone on in this way for nearly a year, until one night when it was growing very late, Susie came in and shut the door of my shop carefully.

"What is it, my dear?" I said cheerfully, for there was a look on her face that troubled me.

"Mary," she said, sinking down at my side and laying her pretty golden head on my knee, "my poor Mary!" and then she began to sob so pitifully.

I had but a little time to spare, for I knew Mrs. Greathouse must have her new dress by the next evening, but I dropped my needle and took her in my arms and whispered:

"What is it, my darling; tell me, won't you?"

"Oh, Mary, so good, so unselfish. I can't bear it. You are working yourself to death for me and mine. I've thought and thought and planned, and there's only one way."

"I don't understand—how hot your cheeks are. You're going to be sick."

"I'm going to die. Don't look so startled. I'm very wicked and foolish, but I can't see you kill yourself nor my precious children starve. I'm only—only going to get married," desperately.

"Then I felt her whole body shudder.

"Yes, darling, but who?"

"I'm going to marry Mr. Caleb Leffingwell."

"Susie! You are mad!"

"No; he proposed to-night as I left the store, and I accepted him,—that's all; why don't you congratulate me?"

"Because I can't, for I know—oh, my darling! I know you don't love him!"

"Love! I loved once and got a sweet reward. "Yes, I'm in love with the old miser's money; that's honest."

"Hush! Never mind, sleep on it, pet. We'll talk about it to-morrow; I must finish this dress now."

"Mary, do stop and rest, you unselfish housekeeper! Your burden shall be lightened. I'm not half as miserable as you fancy."

But I knew how much she suffered, and I sighed, for things had come to a very bad state. What with poor father down with the rheumatism and Susie's children suffering for shoes, and none of us too warmly clad, unless it was "the lady"—that is what Susie had called Fred's wife to me more than once; but I could only sigh and remember that they were her old gowns.

Nevertheless it did seem hard that she and her baby should have the one spare room and a fire, and coal so dear. But in, me, I had promised. Such a rosebud as that little cooing baby was! If I'd had time I'd have cuddled it by the hour, and, strange to say, the mother had called it "Mary." She never said it was for me, and I often wondered, but never asked her—for somehow all us simple folks were a bit afraid of "the lady."

It was a dull rainy evening in February when poor Susie came to me with her pitiful story of sacrifice she had resolved to make. I remember very particularly, because Mrs. Greathouse was to have a party on the 25th, the next night, and I was hurried with her gown.

She came in quite early for it, but the rich silk was all finished. I trembled a mite as she scanned it so closely, but she found no fault whatever, and paid me the $5 for it promptly. Her last words were:

"You are looking far from well, Mary. Tom would hardly recognize his old sweetheart if he could see you now. You need rest, my dear; do take some." Then she passed out.

"Good advice, excellent," said Susie in a hard voice, and I was glad she had not noticed what Mrs. Greathouse said about her brother.

"I wish you had charged her fifteen instead of five, Mary. The dress was worth it."

"Yes, I know," I answered, drearily; "but even that would not have paid all the bills." And for the first time in Susie's presence I broke down and cried.

Even as I wept softly and Susie tried to comfort me, somebody entered the little shop, and, bending over Susie and me, dropped a letter im my lap—a great, big, funny-looking affair.

"A letter! Oh, Mary! who would send you a letter?" said Susie.

"The lady" paused a moment in the shadow of the room, and I tore off the envelope, and there fell into my lap a great lot of bank bills.

"Money!" cried Susie, "money! Who—what does it mean? Oh, here's a note! Listen:

"'DEAR MARY: Accept a little present from a loving FRIEND.'"

That was all; we looked at each other stupidly.

"Who could have sent it? Oh, Susie, it's a mistake!" I gasped."

"No, it is not; the letter is sent to you and is for you. I find it is just $100. I am so glad!"

I kept the money. I needed it sorely, and they all said it really was mine; but I felt uneasy all the time, and wondered and wondered, for we hadn't a rich relation in the world. But even that hundred dollars would not last forever, and by and by I saw Susie looking over her old things and trying to make up her mind that the time had come when she could tell her betrothed husband that she was ready. Poor, poor little Susie!

"I've set the day at last," she said. "It's to be next Tuesday." Then she began to sob.

Once more "the lady" entered and dropped in my lap another letter and a book.

This letter was not so bulky, but when I opened it I found it contained two bills of a hundred dollars each.

"What—who?" I began vaguely as before, when once more "the lady" bent over Susie and I, and winding her white arms around our necks, fell into a violent fit of weeping.

"Oh, my sisters!" she sobbed, when she could speak. "Do you think me blind as well as heartless? Do you think you are to do all the work and me none? Dear, patient fingers!" and to our astonishment she kissed first my needle-pricked hand and then Susie's chapped and toil-marked.

"There's the book," she continued; "read it when you can. I began it when my husband was first taken ill. I fancied I could get it done in time to help him, but I couldn't. Yet he knows—he must know, how glad I am to be able to help those so dear to him."

"Florence," I said, in wonder," what are you talking about?"

"Why, my book; it is there in your lap, as well as the money for it—a portion of it. I always scribbled more or less, but in a careless way, until saw the great need, and then I found I could write even better than I dared hope. I never told, because I wanted to surprise you. Susie, little sister, don't dream of that distasteful marriage. I was so afraid it wouldn't come in time to save you. And Mary, gentle one, I've something for you even better than gold. I—forgive me! I found out all about your sad lover in the west, and I sent a little bird with a message of your faithfulness, your noble life, and the answer came (Oh, the west is not very far away): 'I'm coming.'"

I wondered why Susie, with such a face of peace and joy as I had not seen her wear for years, should look startled and step back, while "the lady"—oh, such a lady—stood between me and the door.

Suddenly she bent and kissed my hot cheek, and deftly snatching the comb that held my curls so very primly—as I deemed most becoming a staid old maid—she fled with Susie into the next room and closed the door.

I knew then why she had held herself so persistently before me, for, standing on the threshold of the outside door stood a tall man, tanned and bearded.

I could not speak. I would have fled, too, but I could not move.

The tall man smiled and approached me, took me in his arms and whispered:

"Is it my own little Mary?"

And somehow in his sheltering arms I found my tongue and answered boldly:

"Yes, Tom."

We call her "the lady" still, sometimes, for she is famous now and rich, and Susie and her children live with her. The old folks have found a better home with Fred, and I can not help but think they told him how we love his wife and all the happiness she brought us.—Exchange.

A Faithful Dog.

One day last week a Boston policeman saw a man lying at full length on the sidewalk. He was intoxicated and unconscious. Over his body, however, a large and handsome Newfoundland dog stood guard. No one could approach his prostrate master without the animal emitting a savage growl and assuming a most formidable attitude. It was fully twenty minutes before the officer could call the dog off and ring for the patrol wagon. Both were taken to the station and put in the same cell. There the man was permitted to sleep off his drunk, while the dog allowed no one to go near the door or attempt to enter the cell.

Table Etiquette.

Traveler (in Western restaurant)—"There's a hair in this soup."

Waiter (imperiously)—"Well, yo might know better than to lean y'r head so far over w'on ye eat."—New York Weekly.

ROBERT AND HIS PONY.

Once upon a time there was an honest young fellow named Robert, who lived all alone in a little house in the middle of a forest. His mother had died when he was a mere child; his father died a few years later, and at his last hour he had said to him: "My dear son, if I had not been the victim of a cruel sorceress you should have inherited a handsome fortune; but now I can only leave you this house and my pony, a good beast; treat him well."

This pony was, in fact; a remarkable animal, very intelligent and very handsome.

Robert had no other means of living except his work in the forest. He gathered dry branches for firewood, and heath to make brooms. He tied them in bundles, and placing them upon the pony's back he went to the city to sell them. There he bought food and garments for himself, and oats for his faithful beast.

One day, after having sold his bundles, he was preparing to return to his home, when an elegant lady approached him and said:

"Is that your pony?"

"Yes."

"He is a fine-looking beast. Will you lend him to me for half an hour? I wish to go and look at one of my farms, and I will give you a shilling for him."

Robert had never parted with his brave little horse, and he hesitated to confide it to the beautiful unknown. But a shilling was more than he made in a week.

"Very well," he said, "I will lend you my pony, but only on condition that you treat him gently, and that you will not beat him. He has never been beaten.

"Have no fear," replied the beautiful lady. She seated herself upon the pony and rode off.

"Who is that woman?" Robert asked.

"What! you do not know her? That is Mistress Hippoharpy, who lives in the great house you see down there. She is very rich.

"I hope," he replied, "that she will treat my pony well.

He was very uneasy, and impatiently awaited the rich lady's return. At last she appeared. She tossed him a shilling, and hastily departed. Robert had no time to thank her, and he certainly would not have done so had she remained, for he saw that his pony was panting and was covered with mud, and on his skin he could see the marks left by a whip. Robert wiped him carefully, carressed him and led him to his stable.

A few days later he once met Mme. Hippoharpy, who called him to lend her his pony again.

"No," he replied; "you shall never have him again."

"I will give you two shillings, she said.

"No," he said, "not for your entire fortune."

"Ah!" she cried, looking at him angrily, "you will repent this."

Suddenly, as he was enternig the forest, five men threw themselves upon him, bound him and carried him off with the pony to the great house where Madam Hippoharpy lived.

There he was obliged to break stones to repair a road in the park, and his dear little pony was delivered to the cruel lady, who beat him and drove him almost to death.

Alone, defenseless, closely watched by his vigilant guards, poor Robert had to submit to his lot. But often he could not restrain a groan. One day, as he was moaning over his cruel fate, he heard a little flutelike voice, which said: "I pity you, I pity you."

The same voice repeated: "I pity you, Robert, I pity you."

He looked again, and saw on a bush a robin redbreast, who nodded his head at him.

"Is it you," said Robert; "Is it you, my beautiful bird, who spoke to me?"

"Yes," replied the bird, making a little bow and wagging his tail. "Can I be of any assistance to you?"

"I am very much obliged to you, but I fear that you can do nothing for me."

"Do you think so? Well, tell me what you desire."

"I wish to regain posession of my pony."

"If I restore him to you will you do for me what I ask you to!,'

"Oh, certainly!"

"Well, listen to me. When the dinner-bell rings, instead of returning to the kitchen, conceal yourself among the bushes near the stable, and you will see what will happen."

Robert did as the bird told him.

The robin redbreast flew to the stable where the pony was shut up.

A servant was there, who, on coming out, ought to carefully close the door, by his mistress' order. But while he was finishing his work he did not notice that the active bird had piled some bits of wood around the hinges of this door, which would prevent his closing it tightly, and when the man came out the robin redbreast flew to the pony and began to tear the rope by which he was tied to his stall. But the task was a difficult one. Notwithstanding all its efforts the bird could not break the rope. Suddenly he heard a shrill little voice, which said: "Do you want me to help you?"

The bird looked and saw a mouse on the hay.

"Thank you, my little friend, I should like some assistance."

"Will you render me a service?"

"Very willingly."

The mouse began to gnaw the rope, and in a moment it broke.

The pony, feeling itself free, rushed out of the stable, followed by the bird.

"Stop, stop!" cried the mouse, who could not go so fast; "you promised to render me a service." The robin redbreast did not hear him. Robert leaped upon the pony, which departed at full gallop.

"Stop, stop," cried the bird. "You promised to do what I asked you to." But Robert did not hear. He thought only of reaching his home in the woods. Arriving there, he took the pony's head in his arms and stroked it affectionately.

"You would not listen to me," said robid redbreast, which had flown after him; "now you must return to the great house."

"But why?"

"To punish the wicked woman who has treated you so cruelly, and prevent her retaking the pony.

"First, pull out the longest feather in my tail.

"What an idea! Certainly not. I am afraid I should hurt you."

"I beg you to, and recollect that you promised to do what I asked you."

Robert obeyed. He pulled out the feather, and this feather transformed itself into a shining steel sword with a gold handle. At the same moment, in the place of the bird, appeared a handsome page, who bowed politely to Robert and said: "I thank you, I am delivered from a cruel enchantment, and I will serve you faithfully as I served your father. It was this Hippoharpy, this frightful sorceress, who, with her magic ring, changed me into a robin redbreast. She also transformed one of my companions, by her soceries she also robbed your father of all his property."

"But," said Robert, "if I attempt to regain my inheritance, she may change me into a frog or spider."

"Fear nothing. Her magic ring cannot resist your sword."

Robert and the page went back to the house of the sorceress, and in spite of the servants who endeavored to prevent them, they entered the room where she was dining.

"Ah, wretch!" she cried at the sight of Robert, "you dare to come here? You shall be punished!" and brandishing her magic ring, she repeated: "You shall be punished, you shall be changed into a vile insect!"

But Robert struck the ring with his sword. Immediately it turned black and broke into a thousand pieces. The sorceress uttered a frightful cry, leaped out of the window and fled across the fields. All her servants, partners in her evil deeds, disappeared at the same time.

"Victory!" cried Robert.

"You have forgotten me," murmured a little voice.

"Ah!" said the page, "It's the mouse who helped me to break the pony's rope."

"What do you want, little one?" asked Robert.

"I wish to retake my real form."

"And what is it necessary to do?"

"You must cut off my tail."

"All right, off it comes then,', said Robert.

As soon as the tail was cut off, in the place of a mouse appeared a young and vigorous youth.

"Ah!" cried the page, "it is the groom who was in your father's service at the same time as myself."

"Very well," replied Robert, "he shall take care of the pony."

Robert regained all the property of which his father had been deprived. He had a kind and generous heart, and all the people, far and near, blessed him for his generosity.

A Recent Search Light Experiment.

The recent experiments with electrical search lights on the Spit, near Hurst Castle, opposite the Needles passage, in the Solent, England, were, so far as can be learned, not in anywise novel, nor is it easy to see how, as is claimed in some quarters, these lights can balk torpedo boat attack. The design was to protect the roadstead, and it is claimed that this was accomplished. It is true that the torpedo boats were discovered in the blackness and held in broad view for the fire of the shore batteries. Perhaps these batteries could have destroyed them before they reached the shipping, perhaps not. Even if so, it does not prove very much.

An account says that a great volume of smoke made by the war ships accompanying the little craft, purposely to mask their design, blew out to sea, the wind being outward, thus enabling the search lights to bring the enemy out clear. But the wind does not always blow in that direction, and hence the test would have been more satisfactory had the wind favored the attack.

Again, the best promise of the torpedo boat is thought to be in the protection of, rather than in the attack upon, harbors. Electrical search lights might or they might not advantage ships coming in from the sea. Supposing they did locate the attacking torpedo boats as they came up; unless there was the power to beat them off, of what value would the knowledge be? If the heavy quick-firing guns now being set up atop the conning towers of the new torpedo boats realize the promises made for them, the torpedo boat will have a palpable advantage, because able to throw upon a ship as heavy shot as can be thrown back, before it an immense target and a steady one, though itself affording only a small and running mark for the ship's gunners stationed aloft and below.—Scientific American.

A Religious Fraud.

An extraordinary religious fraud is reported from Croatia. The whole population was wrought up to a great pitch of excitement by the announcement that the Virgin had appeared in the forest. A shrine was built at once of boughs and branches and in its centre a hole was dug into the ground, looking into which the Virgin was said to be visible to all true believers, who forthwith laid down their offerings round the sacred spot. Some unbelieving Thomases, who maintianed that they saw absolutely nothing in the black hole, were maltreated by the fanatic multitude as evil-doers; one man was killed, another had his leg broken, and many went home with bleeding faces and sore backs. On some days a crowd of 10,000 human beings knelt in the forest and left its offering, which promptly disappeared. But the day of reconing came. Five peasants and a peasant woman, the latter in the act of sending up the "holy spirit" in the form of a turtle dove, were arrested for putting the play on the scene and have already confessed that for two years past they have been making preparations for this swindle.

Lima Beans in California.

The lima bean crop of Ventura county, California, this year will amount to 8,000 tons, worth $400,000.

THE BIRCH TREE.

And the Various Substances That Are Derived from It.

A casual glance at the surroundings of any lumber country, notably along the creeks and ravines, reveals the fact, says the New York Lumber Trade Journal, that at least some birch twigs have withstood the onslaught of country pedagogues, who from time remote have been identified with the legend of birch-oil and elbow-grease as an accelerator to the sluggish school-boy as he stumbles along over the obstacles on the side of science hill. Many twigs remain, and outside their legendary historic value suggested in the foregoing the twigs and bark of the common birch (Betula alba) have really an intrinsic value not second to many of the most valuable plants.

Even the leaves and young shoots secrete a resinous substance having an acid reaction which under the long-legged names of the pharmacist is sold as a medical preparation for as high as $16 per fluid ounce. The inner bark secretes a bitterish alkaloid not unlike cinchona in its nature, and is used largely as an adulterant for quinine in many parts of Europe. The so-called "cinchona mixture" has been found by analysts to consist in many instances of the alkaloid found in the inner bark of the humble birch tree.

The outer bark subjected to dry distillation yields a peculiar empyreumatic oil, having the peculiar odor of Russia leather, and the secret of preparing skins, and that, too, of the very poorest quality of skins, being taken from cattle that have perished on those barren, desolate plains, is the only obstacle thus far to prevent American artisans competing with Russia and Austria in fine leather goods.

It is not necessary, however, to go into chemical technicalities and details in order to arrive at a profitable solution of the uses of birch twigs and birch bark when the larger timber is being cut away and hauled to the sawmill or the turning-lathe. The oil of wintergreen (Oleum gaultheria), so useful, fragrant, and expensive, is nearly always adulterated with birch oil, much of it even is birch oil pure and simple, but is sold as wintergreen oil and is wintergreen oil to all intents and purposes, having, when properly prepared and refined, the same properties—viz., specific gravity, 1,173; boiling point, 412 degrees, and mixes readily with alcohol, chloroform, etc.

The appliances necessary for the preparation of this oil are neither intricate nor costly, being simply a large tub supplied with a coil and steam connection. Of course we are not expected to go into all the details of manufacture. Only brief outlines can be given.

The birch limbs, twigs, bark, and even the leaves, if a mere commercial oil is to be made, are gathered and placed in this large tub, containing the coil for steam-heating, and as fast as the mass accumulates it is kept covered with water, and the tub, being supplied with a tight-fitting lid, or manhole, should be opened as little as possible. After becoming nearly full steam is turned on and the batch kept about blood-warm for twenty-four hours. This will dissolve nearly all the oil and resinous matters, which, being precipitated, causes the mass to assume a very sticky consistency. Steam may now be turned on and the mass brought to boil for a moment or two. With a wooden connection with a small barrel or keg the tank is made tight and brought to a boil; the steam, having previously dissolved the oils, etc., will now vaporize them and will condense in the last-named keg. After a few hours the job is done, the keg is bunged or corked up, and is ready for shipment as commercial wintergreen oil, though made from birch refuse continually in the way.

Bathing in Cold Water.

Concerning bathing of the body, I think our sanitarians are very extravagant, and they have done a great public mischief by setting the great towns to plunder the rivers of their supplies from the head streams.

Even the prophet Mahommed, a great fanatic of cleanliness, regarded friction with sand as compensatory for washing.

If any one supposes that the limbs and trunk of the body cannot be kept as perfectly clean by dry rubbing as by any amount of washing, I say he has something to learn.

All the hardy barbarians of the north have, at all times, been reproached by southern people for their neglect in washing.

The old Romans did not—as a nation—betake themselves to baths till the era of effeminacy set in.

The Scythians of Herodotus were reported not to wash: but in cold weather, at distant intervals, to cover their bodies with a hot, spicy paste. It dried on them, and dropped off when cold, leaving the flesh clean.

Northern races know that cold water takes the strength out of them, and they do not volunteer to touch it. Their practice has more weight with me than recent theories.—T. W. Newman, M. D., in St. Louis Magazine.

ess Louise Elevated by Her Marriage.

An Englishman who is particularly well informed on the state affairs of his country said to a New York Graphic man: "There has been a deal of talk about the Princess Louise of Wales descending to marry Lord Fife, or rather his grace the duke of Fife, and most people would be a good deal surprised to learn that she is in some very real, legal ways elevated by the union. I'll explain. As the daughter of the prince of Wales, supposing she had committed a crime—begging her pardon for the supposition—she would have been tried by the ordinary courts; there would have been no other way. She is not the queen's daughter; she is not the princess royal; she is, or rather was, no one that the law took account of as anybody in particular. Now, however, she is a duchess, a peer of the realm, and can only be tried by the house of lords. See?"

Jews in Warsaw.

There are no fewer than 151,000 Jews in Warsaw, the whole population of which is but 440,000.

WINGED MISSILES.

Corn and potatoes will be a light crop in South Jersey.

The table glass ware manufacturers are preparing to form a trust.

Farmers' Unions, with 1,500,000 members, talk of amalgamating.

Heavy rains in the city of Mexico have caused considerable damage.

The tobacco crop of York county, Pa., promises to be very large and fine.

Dr. Nansen, the explorer, says that the ice in Greenland is 6,000 feet thick.

The Spanish government will adopt submarine torpedo vessels for the navy.

Crop reports from Austro-Hungary indicate about three-fourths of an average yield.

A canal scheme to irrigate 5,000,00 acres of arid land in North Dakota has been projected.

The work of rebuilding the burned city of Spokane Falls, W. T., has commenced.

A runaway train on the Duluth and Iron Range railroad attained a speed of 110 miles an hour.

The wheat crop of Minnesota and the Dakotas will be between 85,000,000 and 90,000,000 bushels.

An experimental electric motor at Baltimore, Md., has successfully made 3 miles a minute on a circular track of 2 miles.

A scheme to import negroes from the United States into Mexico is receiving no encouragement from the Mexican people.

In 1883 five eighths of the people owned their homes, and only three-eighths were the prey of landlordism. In 1886 only three-eighths owned their own homes and five-eighths were reduced to the rank of tenants.

Almost the hardness of the diamond is said to be given by German workmen to steel-engraving tools. The tools are made white hot, plunged repeatedly into sealing wax until cold, and then just touched with oil of turpentine.

The big four-masted schooner John Paull, lately launched at Bath, Me., is a marine wonder in her way. She went from Bath to Norfolk, Va., loaded there with 2,459 tons of coal, and reached Providence, all in eleven days, which is steamer time. The Paull is 210 feet long, forty-four feet wide and twenty-one feet depth of hold. All hoisting is done by steam, even to the clewing up of the big topsails. She is wire-rigged, and spreads 7,000 yards of canvas.

The pearl oyster, containing the pearl, and whose shell is lined with the brilliantly tinted mother-of-pearl used in so many ways, is found chiefly about the southern coasts of Asia. An uncomfortably sharp substance entering the shell is covered by the inmate, thus forming a pearl. This habit has been utilized to force the oyster to produce pearls, sometimes the form of a cross being placed in the shell to be converted into a beautiful ornament. They are taken from the bed of the sea by divers.

An amusing marriage took place in Elberton, Ga., the other day. A couple came into the court house to be married. A new justice was called in. He had no form, and improvised a ceremony. He first ordered the couple to join hands, and then, after hesitating a while, he asked the groom these questions: "Will you stick to this woman through thick and thin, up and down, right and left, hot or cold, wet or dry, and have no other wife but her? If you will you can have her for a wife." Similar questions having been propounded to the woman, and affirmative answers having been given, he pronounced them husband and wife.

A beautiful live white owl is on exhibition at a music store in Louisville. It was sent by L. J. Smith, of Niagara Falls, and belongs to a very rare species. It was captured by a young hunter in the woods near Quebec. It was found in a hollow tree, and was secured with a net. The habitation of the bird is in the extreme north, so Mr. Smith wrote them when he sent the owl, and only extremely cold weather drives it as far south as Quebec. So far as known only seven of the birds have been captured or killed in Canada during the last three years. The one on exhibition is a perfect specimen. It is snow white, and about the size and shape of the common large owl.

The weight and bulk of the gold and silver coin now held by the United States treasury forms the subject of inquiry by a correspondent of a mathematical turn of mind, and he finds that the weight of the gold is 691 tons of 2,000 pounds, and the silver 8,000 tons. Packing it along the highway, as cord wood is packed, the gold would make a barricade four feet high, four feet thick, for a distance of 335 feet, and the silver, if similarly packed, would extend 4,248 feet, or five-sixths of a mile. If packed in carts, one ton to each cart, the procession would be nearly thirty-three miles long, of which distance the gold-bearing carts would cover two and a half miles and the silver a fraction over thirty and a quarter miles.

Very few consumers of wheaten products are aware of the fact that crackers are the oldest form of bread. Fragments of unfermented cakes were discovered in the Swiss lake dwellings, which belong to the neolithic age of the world. Although this rude form of bread was early discarded for the fermented variety, yet in this, as in many other matters, it was found convenient to return to a discarded and apparently valueless process. Thin, unfermented cakes were found to possess merits for special purposes. They would keep good for a great length of time, and thus afforded wholesome and nutritious food in a portable and convenient form. The simplicity of their making and baking was also a point in their favor.

Along the shore of the Oneida Lake there is an Indian's grave, where at times a weird and supernatural light makes its appearance. It is described as a ball of fire about the size of a large orange, and sways to and fro in the air about twenty feet from the ground, confining its irregular movements within a space about one hundred feet square. People have attempted to go near enough to solve the mystery, but it would suddenly disappear before reaching it. A very peculiar story is told by the neighbors near the spot. They claim that many years ago the locality was part of an Indian reservation. A man by the name of Belknap frequently dreamed that there was a crock in the Indian cemetery containing immense treasures, and that if he went there at the hour when graveyards yawn he could secure it. These dreams were repeated so often that they had a strong effect, and he went there with pick and shovel according to instructions, but he failed to turn round three times when he found the crock, as the dream directed. He went to pick it up, but was stunned by a flash of lightning, and the crock disappeared. Since that time the spot has been haunted by the mysterious light.